

'Cuckoo pupation' in the 6-spot burnet, *Zygaena filipendulae* (L.) ssp. *stephensi* Dupont.—On 14.v.1992, the weather was warm and sunny, if slightly blustery on Gurnard's Head, near Zennor, Cornwall. Whilst photographing some burnet caterpillars, my attention was drawn to the empty cocoon of what appeared to be the emperor moth, *Pavonia pavonia* L., lying in the grass. The 'back end' of the cocoon was broken open, and although there was no sign of the chrysalis, inside was a burnet caterpillar, apparently about to pupate (Plate IV, Fig. 4). The empty papery cocoon of another burnet was already attached to the inside of the emperor's silk cocoon (just visible on the right of the photograph).

Why the burnet caterpillars had chosen such an unlikely spot to pupate is not known. Perhaps they were attracted by the texture of the emperor's silk, giving them an ideal substrate upon which to construct their own cocoons. Hiding their cocoons so may offer some protection from predation by birds. The two species of burnet that occur in Cornwall (W. G. Tremewan, pers. comm.), *Z. filipendulae* and *Z. trifolii* (Esper), normally spin their cocoons well up on the stems of grasses or other vegetation. Although the vegetation was moderately short, long grass stems were available to the caterpillars. Many species of burnet conceal their cocoons, and even *Z. filipendulae* does so in Turkey (W. G. Tremewan, pers. comm.).

My thanks to Mr W. G. Tremewan for his comments, and kind assistance to a non-lepidopterist.—Richard A. Jones, 13 Bellwood Road, Nunhead, London SE15 3DE.

Antennal cleaning behaviour of *Vespula germanica* (F.) (Hymenoptera: Vespidae).—While photographing wasps feeding on rotten pears on 15.x.1992, I obtained a shot of *Vespula germanica* cleaning its antennae (Plate IV, Fig. 2). It draws them through the gaps on the undersides of the lower ends of the tibiae, between the tibia and a short apical spur, which is just visible on the wasp's right front leg. These spurs also occur on the middle and hind tibiae.—N. A. Callow, 25 Cranes Park Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8BS.

***Peritrechus gracilicornis* Puton (Hemiptera Lygaeidae) recorded in error.**—The specimen of a lygaeid bug labelled '*Peritrechus gracilicornis* Puton, Great Deep, Southbourne, W. Sussex, 25.vii.91, swept', exhibited at the 1991 annual exhibition on 26th October 1991, (Hodge, 1992) has recently been examined by Stephen Judd, Entomology Department, Liverpool Museum and he has redetermined it as a female *P. nubilus* (Fallén).

Southwood and Leston (1959) state in couplet 5 on page 91 that the posterior tibiae are completely or almost completely black. Whilst this is true for many specimens of *P. nubilus*, this character is unreliable and the colour of the posterior tibiae is often as pale as in the closely related *P. gracilicornis*. A reliable external character is the relative size of the eyes which need to be accurately measured and compared with the width of the vertex: in *P. nubilus* the eyes are smaller, less than half the vertex width; in *P. gracilicornis* the larger eyes are as wide as or wider than half the vertex width. Both *P. nubilus* and *P. gracilicornis* can be separated from *P. geniculatus* (Hahn) by their distinctly more transverse pronota, as well as by the relatively thinner apical antennal segments. It should also be noted that *P. geniculatus* can also have the posterior tibiae pale-coloured.—Peter J. Hodge, 8 Harvard Road, Ringmer, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 5HJ.

REFERENCES

- Hodge, P. J. 1992. [Exhibit at 1991 BENHS Annual Exhibition.] *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.* 5: 77.
 Southwood, T. R. E. & Leston, D. 1959. *Land and water bugs of the British Isles*. London: Warne.